

**To:** Carey, Curtis[Carey.Curtis@epa.gov]  
**Cc:** Peterson, Mary[Peterson.Mary@epa.gov]  
**From:** Brincks, Mike  
**Sent:** Wed 10/14/2015 8:49:04 PM  
**Subject:** Re: OPED for signature today

Let me do a quick read thru...

Sent from my iPhone

On Oct 14, 2015, at 3:46 PM, Carey, Curtis <Carey.Curtis@epa.gov> wrote:

Mike,

I hope you're feeling just a little better. We have an OPED regarding WLL that I would like to send to the Post-Dispatch today. It has been through Mary, Alyse and Lynn's reviews. I also shared it with HQ OPA for their awareness.

If you are well enough to review we can put this under your signature, or release it under Mary's signature.

10/14/15 DRAFT OPED for St. Louis Post Dispatch

No imminent risks from landfill

I want to take a moment to share with you important details regarding the West Lake Landfill. It is vitally important to us here at EPA that those who live in the areas around the landfill know and understand the science-based facts regarding the contamination and what risks the wastes pose.

The most important thing for St. Louis families to know is that there is no imminent threat that the subsurface smoldering event (SSE) in the Bridgeton Landfill will reach the radiologically impacted materials (RIM) at the adjacent West Lake Landfill.

We have completed an initial review of the Missouri Attorney General's documents and disagree with the findings that the SSE is rapidly moving towards the RIM. We also strongly disagree with the characterization of a "Chernobyl-like event". EPA's own Office

of Research Development said in a 2014 report that if the SSE were to reach the RIM, there is no indication of an explosive threat. In the unlikely event the SSE does reach RIM, we would anticipate a possible increase in release of gases, such as Radon, from the landfill. The release of any gases would be localized and not occur over the entire site.

St. Louis County has recently released an updated evacuation plan. While the news of an emergency evacuation plan may be new information for many people, the plan has existed and been publicly known for more than a year. The plan was developed in 2014 in consultation with multiple emergency response organizations including the EPA. In July 2014, Director of St. Louis County Office of Emergency Management, Michael Smiley discussed the plan with the West Lake Landfill Community Advisory Group. The plan calls for annual review and update. In April 2015, Local Emergency Planning Committee Chairman and Director of the St. Louis County Police Department Emergency Manager Mark Diedrich made a public presentation about the updated plan to the West Lake Landfill Community Advisory Group. It is important to remember St. Louis County Executive Steve Stenger's remarks that the existence of the plan does not indicate any immediate threat to the community by the landfill. The business of emergency planning is to be prepared for all types of emergencies and disasters, irrespective of the likelihood that such disasters may occur.

We would like for the public to rest assured that EPA and MDNR continue to monitor the SSE, and EPA regularly reviews the SSE data to evaluate the movement of the SSE. To date, those reviews have not indicated advancement of the SSE beyond the neck area of the Bridgeton Landfill. Based on the scientific data evaluated to date by our experts, the data do not conclusively support a scenario at this time where the SSE will encounter the RIM.

We remain focused on our work towards a final remedy at the site, to ensure that human health and the environment remain protected from the contaminants in the future.

For information on the landfill, public meeting notices, correspondence and reports, please visit: [http://www3.epa.gov/region07/cleanup/west\\_lake\\_landfill/](http://www3.epa.gov/region07/cleanup/west_lake_landfill/)

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